

April 9, 2019  
Assembly Committee on Commerce and Labor

**Letter in Support of AB456**

Dear Chair Spiegel, Vice Chair Frierson, and Members of the Assembly Committee on Commerce and Labor,

My name is J.D. Klippenstein. I am a resident of Sparks, Nevada and serve as the Executive Director of ACTIONN. We are a non-partisan and grassroots organization in Washoe County that engages faith communities and other stakeholders in community organizing and advocacy. I am writing this letter in support of AB456

As you are well aware, our state is faced with an affordable housing crisis. One of the root causes of this crisis is a severe shortage of affordable housing options for low-income residents. According to the most recent data from the National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC), Nevada ranks last in the country in terms of affordable housing available to extremely low-income renters. There only 19 available rental units for every 100 extremely low-income renter households.

The other root cause is poverty and a stagnant minimum wage. While cost-of-living is skyrocketing, our minimum wage hasn't increased in nearly 10 years. According to the NLIHC, a Nevadan earning the minimum wage of \$8.25 an hour has to work 72 hours a week to simply afford a 1-bedroom apartment at Fair Market Rent. This is not simply an unfortunate fact. This is an injustice. In the shadows of economic diversification and billion dollar corporate tax breaks, other Nevadans are being forced to work 2 or more jobs to simply keep a roof over their families heads. As a state, we can and must do better. All Nevadans deserve to be treated with economic dignity.

This is why ACTIONN and our many community partners support AB456. We must raise the minimum wage if we want to address our state's affordable housing crisis. Let me be clear, we do not believe that a \$12 minimum wage by 2024 is enough, but we think it is a good starting point. This bill and this important conversation must continue to move forward. We cannot wait to act. The well-being of thousands of Nevadan families hangs in the balance.

Thank you,

J.D. Klippenstein  
Executive Director  
ACTIONN